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DSAA, GIGI'S PLAYHOUSE - ATLANTA, AND NDSC CONDEMN STATEMENT MADE BY CONGRESSWOMAN MARJORIE TAYLOR GREENE (R-GA)

January 29, 2021, Roswell, GA – The Down Syndrome Association of Atlanta, Gigi's Playhouse-Atlanta, and the National Down Syndrome Congress (NDSC) strongly disagree with the decision of House Republicans to appoint Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-GA) to the House Education and Labor Committee due to her history of conspiracy theories around school shootings and use of the word "retard" as a pejorative term. "The Down syndrome and disabilities communities are concerned that Rep. Greene's verbiage will distract from the committee's work and that her words truly reflect outdated, damaging beliefs that will negatively impact students with intellectual developmental disabilities (I/DD) for years to come," states Down Syndrome Association of Atlanta Executive Director, Sheryl Arno.

Recently a video that Rep. Greene posted prior to taking office has resurfaced on social media platforms. In her video, Rep. Greene, when speaking of other elected officials, says, "Stupid simple – Retards; I'm sorry, I know that is an offensive word. I am not trying to talk down on people with Down syndrome, but that's what these people are. These people are so stupid and ignorant that they cannot put something common sense in place."

Rep. Greene's statements are particularly damaging to individuals with Down syndrome and other intellectual or developmental disabilities as they are more likely to be victims of bullying. Her words promote a culture of casual cruelty toward people with disabilities. NDSC Executive Director David Tolleson said, "Men, women, and children with Down syndrome should never be used as a punch line to make points in a political debate." He continued, "They are people who deserve respect and dignity. Rep. Greene's comments send a message to students, parents, and educators that she believes people with disabilities are not capable of decision-making. Her words and beliefs are a slap in the face to people with disabilities and we do not support her appointment to the Education and Labor Committee."

About Down Syndrome Association of Atlanta

Founded by a small group of parents in 1979, The Down Syndrome Association of Atlanta (DSAA) is a 501 (c)(3) Georgia non-profit organization dedicated to providing individuals with Down syndrome and their families life-long community connections. Today, DSAA serves 800 families in 18 counties in the greater Metro-Atlanta area with its programs, services, resources, and activities for all age groups. It is the largest volunteer organization for those touched by Down syndrome in Georgia. For more information about the DSAA, please visit our website at www.dsaatl.org

About Gigi's Playhouse Atlanta

GiGi's Playhouse Atlanta is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing free therapeutic programming, resources, and support to families of individuals with T21/ Trisomy 21/Down syndrome. Programs at GiGi's Playhouse Atlanta address the developmental needs of children with T21/Down syndrome, including the areas of gross motor, fine motor, intellectual, social, and communication development. For more information about Gigi's Playhouse Atlanta, please visit our website at www.gigisplayhouse.org/atlanta

About the National Down Syndrome Congress

Founded in 1973, the National Down Syndrome Congress is the country's oldest organization for people with Down syndrome, their families, and the professionals who work with them. A 501(c)(3) non-profit advocacy organization, the NDSC provides support and information about issues related to Down syndrome throughout the lifespan, as well as on matters of public policy relating to disability rights. The National Down Syndrome Congress is committed to creating a national climate in which all people will recognize and embrace the value and dignity of people with Down syndrome. For more information about the NDSC, please visit our website at www.ndsccenter.org.

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